

- In multigeneration studies using rats, administration of saccharin in the diet induced transitional cell carcinomas and papillomas of the urinary bladder in the first-generation male offspring.³

- Although saccharin has been added as a sweetener to newly formulated pediatric preparations of acetaminophen, cold and cough remedies, antidiarrheal medications, and other products, there is a scarcity of neonatal and infant studies. Most experimental and epidemiologic studies have focused on adult animal and human subjects.

- Medical research using rats and mice over the past 60 plus years has saved hundreds of thousands of human lives. To say, as Dr Chappel quotes, that the use of rats in research is invalid because "Man is not a big rat" is ludicrous.

- Recently, many pharmaceutical companies have marketed a plethora of new over-the-counter medications that contain saccharin, sugar (glucose, fructose, sucrose, confectioners' sugar, or dextrose), sorbitol, or all of these. This is both inappropriate and unnecessary. It makes no scientific sense.

It is the role of the government regulatory agencies to keep the public informed that saccharin has been added to these formulations. They have failed.

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Using the FAX

TO THE EDITOR: Use of facsimile (FAX) machines in the emergency department for transferring patient informa-

tion is now well established. We report a case of international FAX transfer of patient data that affected the care of the patient.

Report of a Case

The patient, a 68-year-old woman, was visiting Yosemite National Park (California) on holiday from New Zealand when malaise, fatigue, sweats, and nausea developed. She had no chest pain or fever. Because of a history of two-vessel coronary artery bypass grafting four years before, the patient was extremely concerned about the possibility of heart disease.

The patient's blood pressure was 206/100 mm of mercury; her vital signs and cardiopulmonary and gastrointestinal examination findings were normal. A cardiogram showed depressed ST segments and inverted T waves inferolaterally without ectopy.

Because of the abnormal findings, we called the patient's hospital in Auckland. A FAX of a cardiogram done three years before was sent from New Zealand to Yosemite within minutes. This electrocardiogram showed that the inferolateral changes were new, adding to the database on the patient. The patient was treated and then transferred to a hospital two hours away for further care.

Discussion

Many uses for FAX machines in medical settings have been proposed.^{1,2} In Yosemite we have routinely used this means to send or receive written consent for the release of records, for medical reports, or for cardiograms done within the United States. This was our first use of the technology to receive patient clinical data from overseas that affected decisions in the emergency setting.

We anticipate and encourage increased international use of FAX capabilities to improve the care of traveling patients who experience unexpected illness.

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